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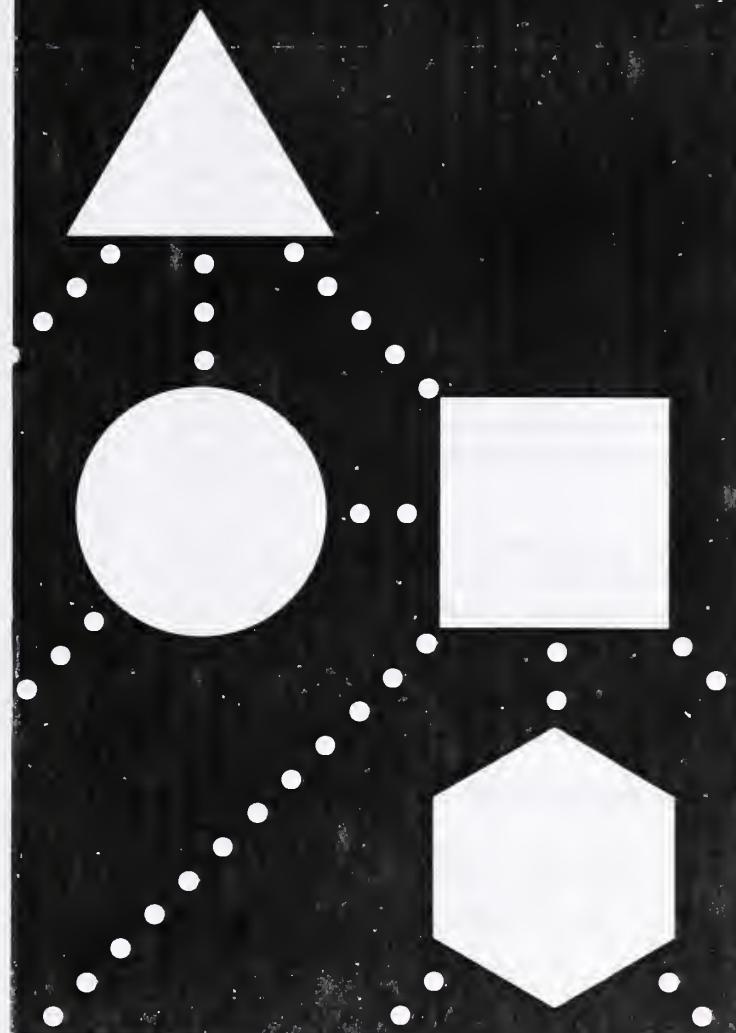
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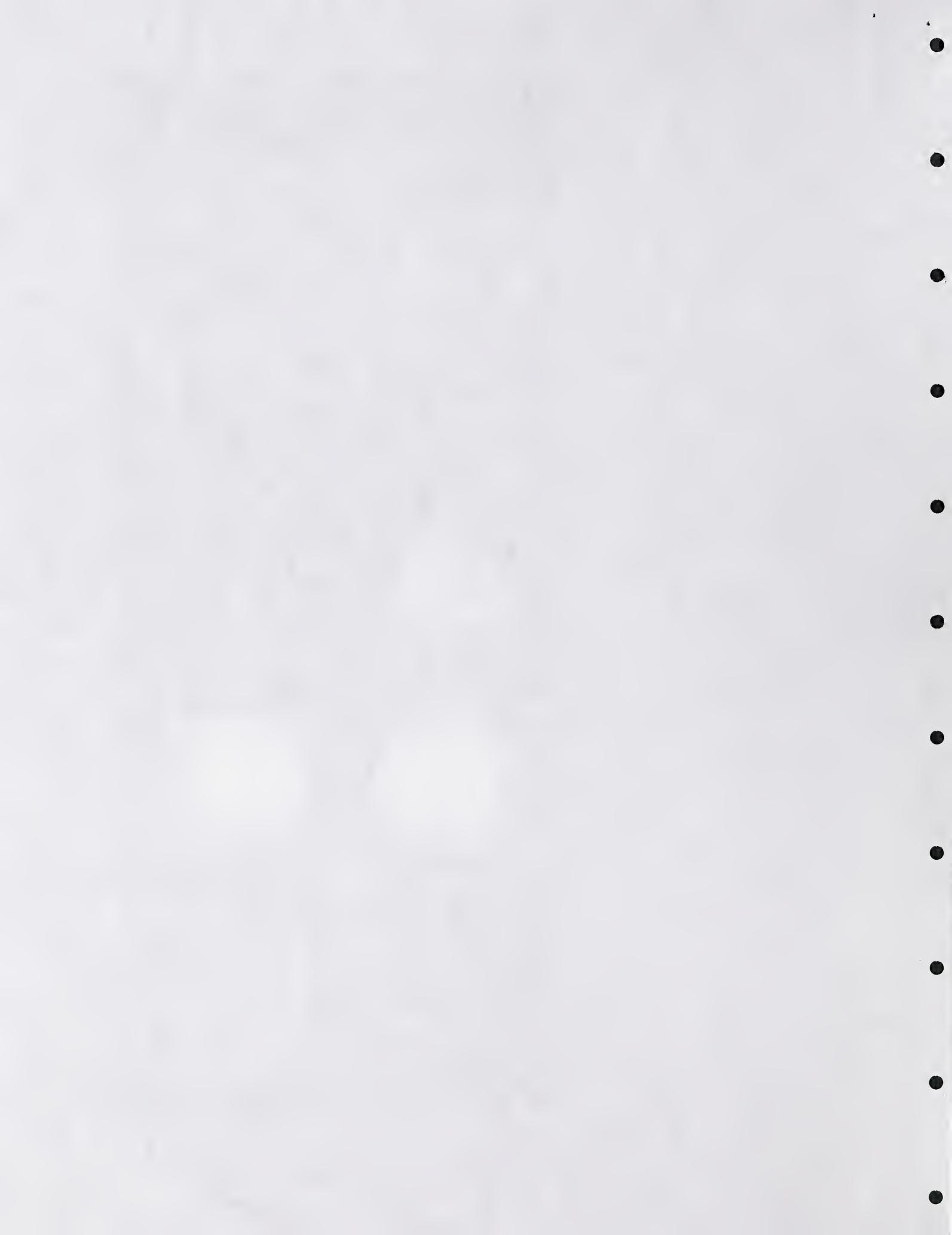
United States Department of Agriculture

OCT 31 1991
CATALOGING PREP

Framework for Change

Work Force Diversity and
Delivery of Programs







THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

May 3, 1990

TO: ALL USDA EMPLOYEES

SUBJECT: COMMITMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND CIVIL RIGHTS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's "Framework for Change: Work Force Diversity and Delivery of Programs" represents my goal for diversifying our work force over the next decade here at the Department. The document builds on Secretary Lyng's Equal Opportunity/Civil Rights directive because the latter is an exceptional instrument.

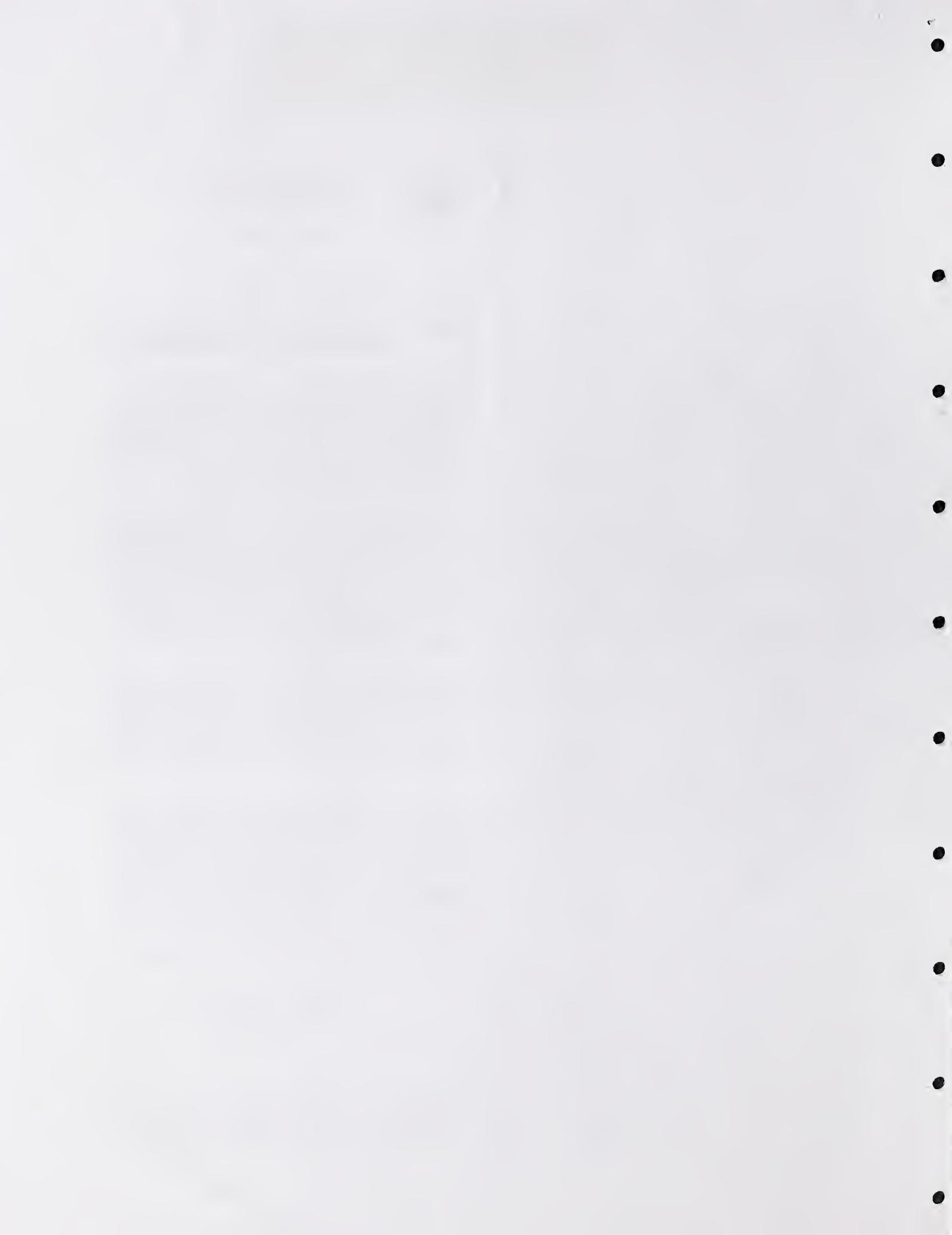
Today, I am re-affirming that directive and it will continue in force during my tenure as Secretary. I want every employee to read the document and subscribe to its every word. It truly is unfortunate that such a statement should be necessary in this country in the 1990s. For me, equal opportunity, work force diversity, and basic human rights are a given. They should not be subject to debate, and everyone at USDA should follow them in spirit and in law.

My commitment to the advancement of women and minorities should be clear from my appointments of top USDA officials. All of us lead by example. Our senior officials will set the right kind of example in this sensitive area. Most of us have spent many years working to further this cause, and we will continue to do so.

One cannot be complacent in dealing with this subject. We must press forward aggressively, and that requires leadership. Each of us is responsible for treating our colleagues, employees, and program constituents fairly. We must foster an environment that values cultural diversity, and one that challenges and rewards positive contributions to this worthy cause. Backsliding cannot and will not be tolerated.

With your concerted help we can and will reach our goals.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Clayton Yeutter".
Clayton Yeutter



THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE
Washington, D.C. 20250
June 12, 1986

Subject: Commitment and Accountability for Equal Opportunity and Civil Rights

To: Assistant Secretaries
Agency Heads

Recently charges of discrimination have been made against the United States Department of Agriculture. I have received complaints. These charges and complaints are being investigated to determine their validity. If necessary, corrective action will be taken. This memorandum, though stimulated by the charges, is not written to discuss them specifically. It is being sent to you because, as a new Secretary of Agriculture, I want the principal officials of the Department to understand clearly my fundamental view on this issue.

Equal opportunity and civil rights are of great importance. Discriminatory practices in any form must not and will not be tolerated. Avoidance of discrimination must be our daily, regular, constant practice. It must be so deeply ingrained in our policies and practices that it becomes automatic. We must be so completely dedicated to an anti-discrimination policy that when the slightest hint of discrimination shows up it is quickly spotted and eliminated as a glaring inconsistency.

As USDA's principal officers, you are charged with, and are expected to uphold, the highest level of public trust in the mission and programs of this Department. You have an obligation to assume and maintain direct and personal responsibility for the way the work force and program constituents are treated. Unless you do this, you place the credibility and integrity of this Department at risk. Errors of omission or commission of one office here reflect upon all of us.

The success of our programs is dependent on our work force and is measured by the public we serve. Therefore, when our employees or those we serve experience discriminatory practices, we suffer a loss of integrity. Consequently, your success is directly related to the effectiveness of our equal opportunity and civil rights programs.

I will not tolerate discrimination in any form, and I expect you to make equality of opportunity and respect for civil rights an integral part of all decisions affecting your work force and programs. I expect you to communicate, educate, and train all managers and supervisors on their critical performance requirements in this area. I want civil rights clearly reflected in the performance decisions you make regarding their future employment with this Department.

Each of you must assume personal responsibility for these programs. You should immediately assess the resources, technical skills, qualifications, and performance of the civil rights staff charged with providing you with the counsel needed to effectively carry out your programs. I expect you to mandate that their counsel and advice be accepted and acted upon.

I will not condone harassment, reprisals or violations of the spirit or intent of the law. I respect our work force and the work it does. I am confident of our ability to fairly and equitably enforce the law and our regulations, and I expect each of us to resubscribe to that effort.

The Office of Advocacy and Enterprise and the Office of Personnel will emphasize their responsibilities for monitoring civil rights, equal opportunity and personnel policies of this Department, and their views and assessments will be communicated to you.

I have directed the Deputy Secretary, working with the Assistant Secretary for Administration, to provide me with periodic assessments and recommendations that will be communicated to you for immediate action. The first report will be due to me within 60 days.

Here is a word of caution: Do not take this matter lightly. I expect you to assume personal responsibility and accountability for complying with the recommendations and assessment, and I expect you to correct any program or management practice that results in inequitable treatment. Failure to do this will be viewed as a grievous weakness in management which, in my view, no other accomplishments can offset.

Ronald T. Regan
Secretary

Introduction

Issue: The U.S. Department of Labor maintains that between now and the year 2000, women, minorities, and immigrants will account for 80 percent of the United States' labor force growth. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has a need to remedy underrepresentation in its work force by providing equal employment and promotion opportunities for all employees. USDA is near the bottom in its ranking among Federal agencies in the employment of minorities, individuals with disabilities, and women. In addition, a March 1990 General Accounting Office report entitled "Need for Improved Work Force Planning" describes the need for USDA to improve work force planning and develop mechanisms for monitoring progress. We continue to receive complaints from the public regarding the lack of equal access to USDA programs. We believe there is a positive correlation between work force diversity and the perception of fairness in program-related decisions.

General: All USDA employees are responsible for complying fully with the letter and spirit of Equal Opportunity/Civil Rights (EO/CR) laws and regulations and for demonstrating their commitment and accountability to USDA's Policy Statement signed by the Secretary.

This plan:

- Defines USDA's policies on EO/CR.
- Outlines employee and supervisory responsibilities and accountability for implementing the policy.
- Describes programs for implementing the Department's goal.



Goal: Build a diverse work force approximating the Nation's labor force at entry, mid, senior and executive levels and ensure that this work force delivers programs in an efficient, effective, and fair manner by the year 2000.

Purpose: USDA will implement a strategic framework to accomplish the stated goal and to achieve the following objectives which respond to the economic, social, demographic, and technological forces that are likely to affect USDA from now until the year 2000.

1. Achieving work force diversity wherever under-representation exists as identified in the 5-year Affirmative Employment Program Plan by increasing year-by-year the number of:

- Minorities, women and disabled persons hired at the entry level.
- Minorities, women and disabled persons at mid- and senior-level management (GS/GM 13 to 15).
- Minorities, women and disabled persons at the executive level of management (SES 1-6/GS 16-18).

2. Achieving a work force that values cultural diversity and provides career advancement opportunities by:

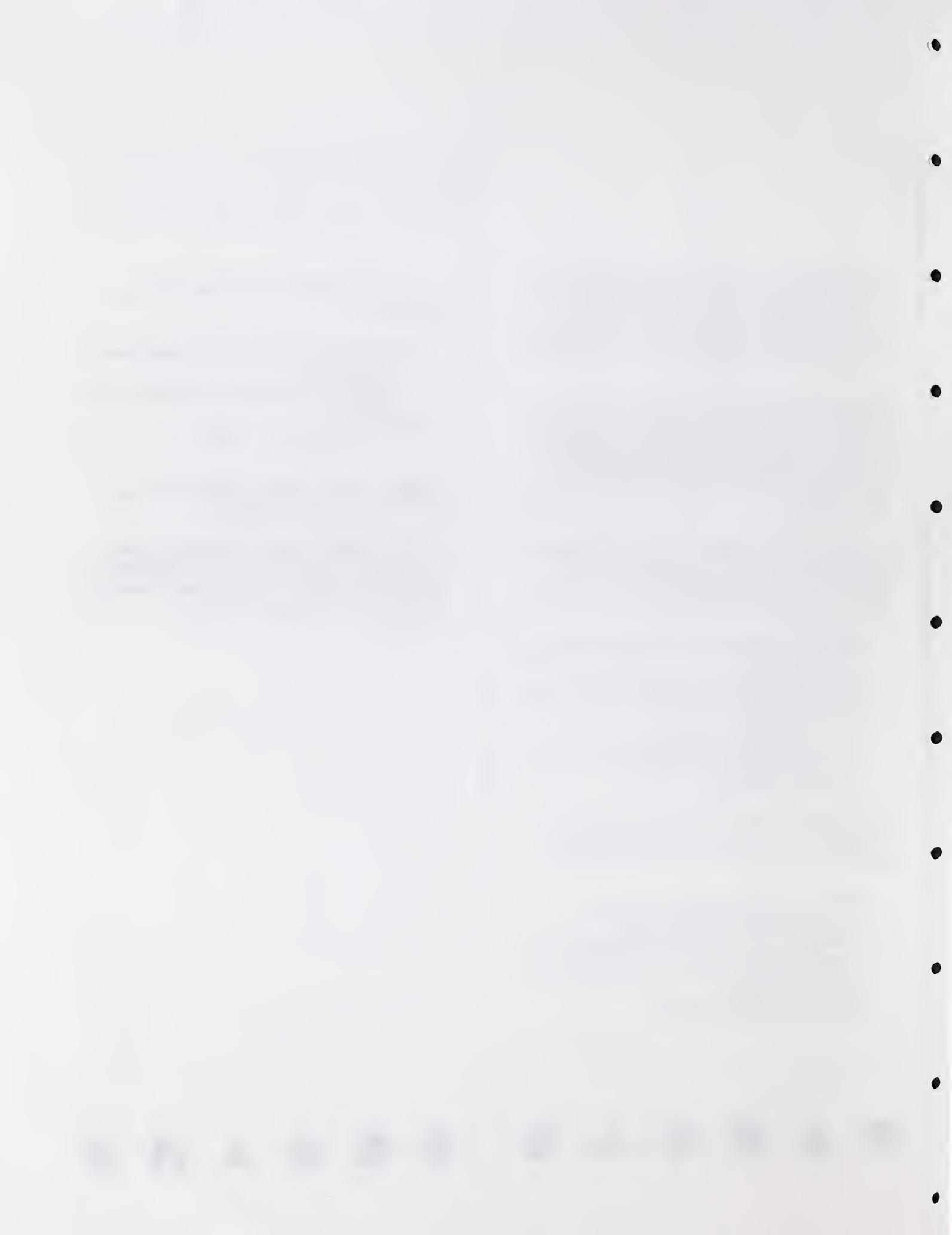
- Educating managers/supervisors on the dynamics of work force diversity.
- Creating and maintaining developmental opportunities to meet the new skills needed to carry out USDA's mission.
- Resolving complaints promptly.

3. Achieving fairness in the delivery of USDA programs by:

- Providing outreach to enhance public notification systems.
- Eliminating the barriers that give rise to complaints.
- Resolving complaints promptly.

Scope: This policy applies to general officers, agency heads, and all employees.

Specific actions for accomplishing this goal may vary depending on the agency plans negotiated by the general officers with the Assistant Secretary for Administration and approved by the Secretary.



Policy— Equal Opportunity/Civil Rights:

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General:

USDA must value the diversity of its work force and the public we serve. The national and international economic, social, and technological forces that will shape the Department's mission demand that we understand and respect diversity. We must deliver our programs effectively to a culturally diverse population and become more heterogeneous in work force composition.

We must move quickly and decisively to recruit, hire, and retain qualified minorities, women, and individuals with disabilities. We must become more competitive in our hiring practices, more effective in our management of human resources, and we must eliminate all forms of institutional discrimination.

All USDA employees are responsible for complying with the letter and spirit of civil rights laws and regulations and for demonstrating their commitment to USDA's Equal Opportunity (EO) policy. USDA will administer its personnel policies and practices in a nondiscriminatory manner. Equal opportunity is required by law, and is administered and monitored by the Assistant Secretary for Administration.

USDA prohibits all forms of sexual harassment by all managers, supervisors, or employees. No supervisor shall threaten or insinuate, either explicitly or implicitly, that an employee's submission to or rejection of sexual advances will in any way influence any personnel decision regarding that employee's employment, wages, advancement, assigned duties, shifts, or any other condition of employment or career development. Any sexual harassment in the workplace which creates an offensive work environment, whether physical or verbal, is prohibited regardless of whether committed by supervisory or nonsupervisory personnel.

Definitions:

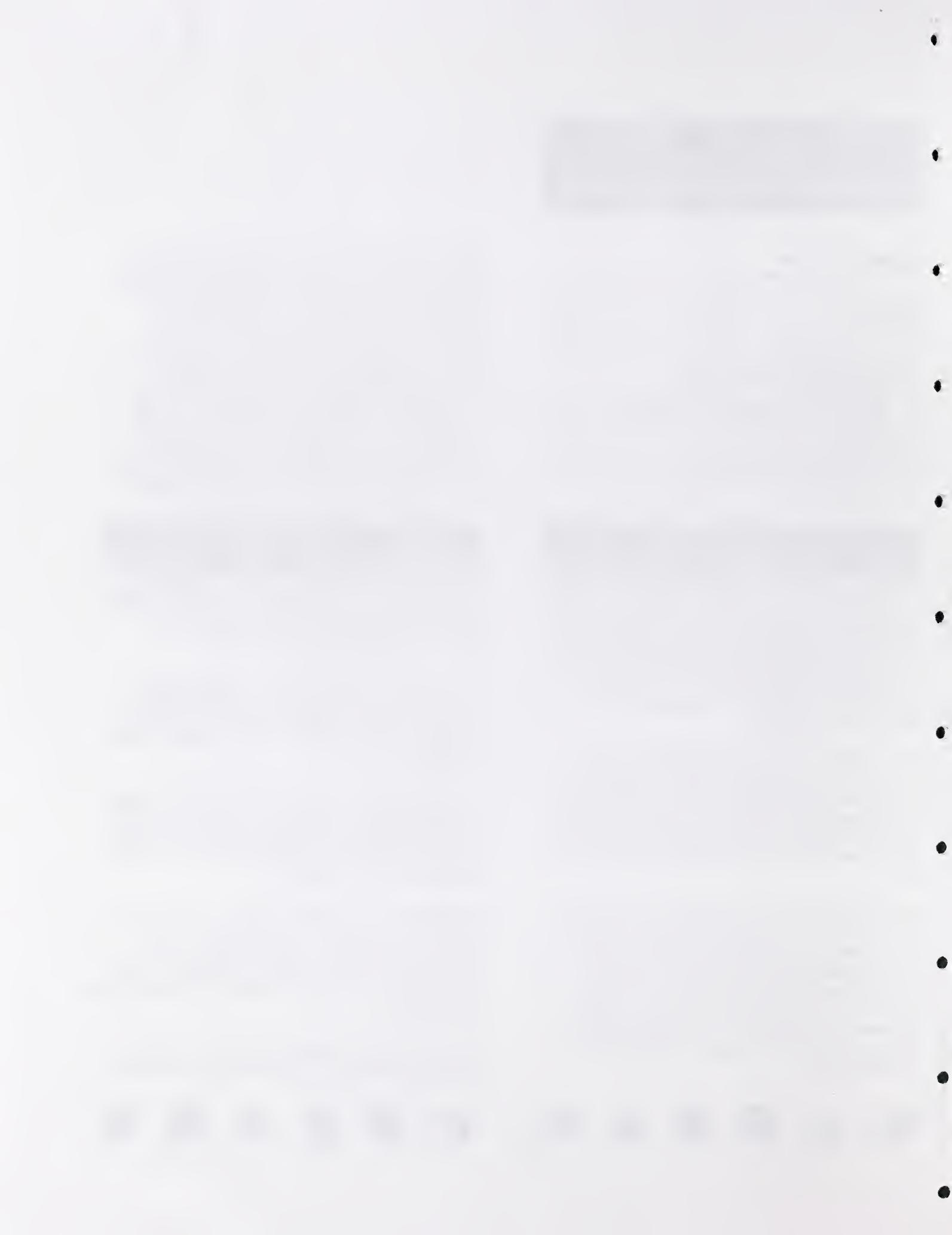
Civil Rights Laws require that all USDA programs and employment practices be administered without regard to race, color, age, sex, national origin, disability, religion, or marital status.

Equal Opportunity means that all personnel policies, practices, and procedures are administered without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, age, and disability.

Affirmative Action focuses on the implementation of positive steps to ensure that all levels of USDA's work force are representative of available, qualified internal candidates, other Federal agencies, and the qualified civilian labor force.

A Culturally Diverse Work Force is one in which all employees, regardless of race, color, age, sex, national origin, disability, religion, or marital status, are found in all facets and levels of organizational functioning including mission, policy, programs, and operations.

General Officers include the: Secretary; Deputy Secretary; Under and Assistant Secretaries; General



Counsel; Inspector General; Judicial Officer; Director, Office of Budget and Program Analysis; Director of Public Affairs; and Executive Assistant to the Secretary.

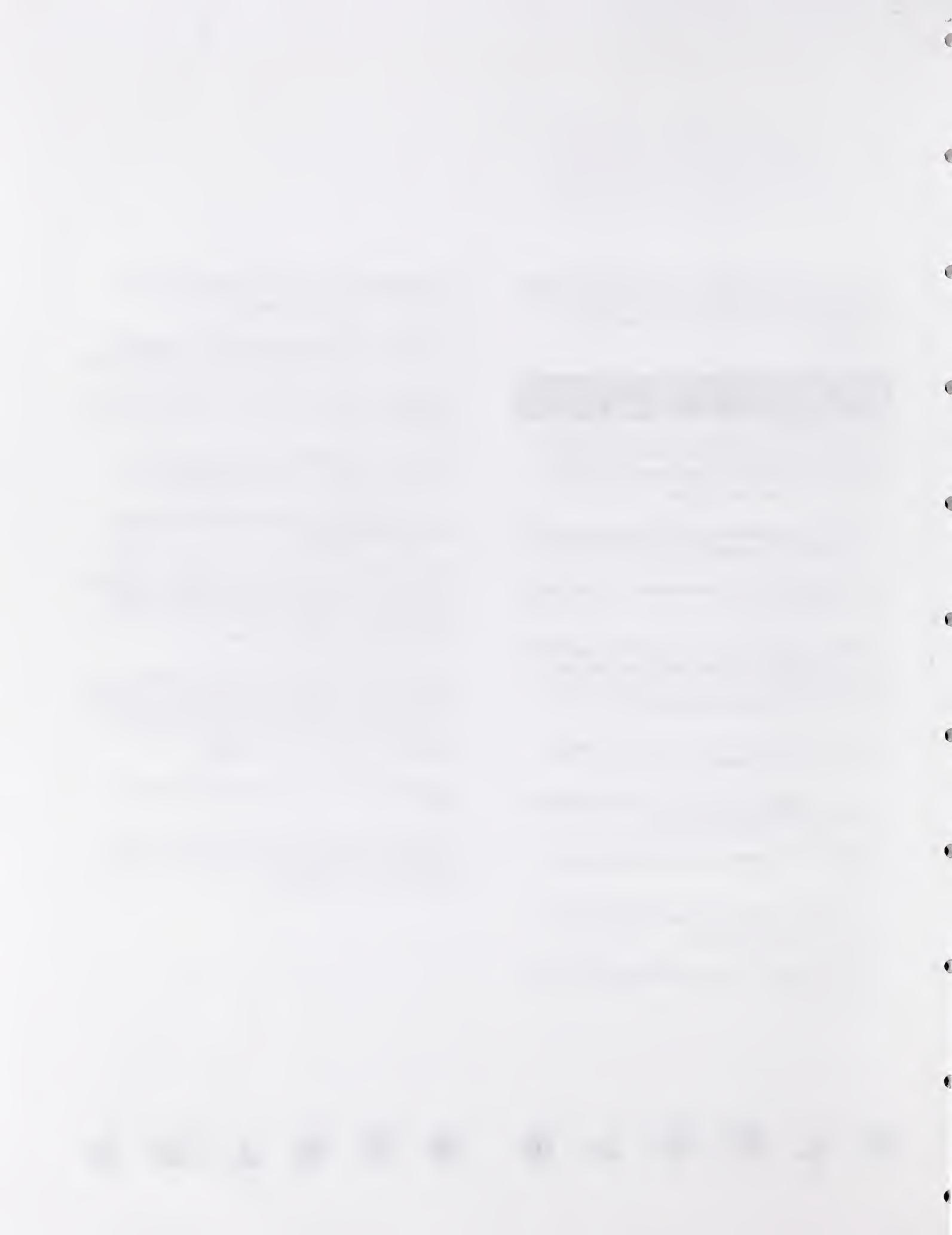
Policy:

The general officers, agency heads, and all other levels of management will administer all employment activities and deliver programs in a nondiscriminatory manner as follows:

- Provide equal opportunity to all employees and to all applicants for employment.
- Take aggressive affirmative action to make equal opportunity a reality.
- Prohibit discrimination or harassment because of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disabilities in any employment decision or in the administration of any personnel policy.
- Promote advancement of employees through effective career counseling.
- Afford all employees equal access to developmental training and work assignments.
- Foster an environment that respects and values diversity.
- Take prompt action to resolve employment and program delivery complaints.
- Conduct regular civil rights compliance reviews of USDA programs.

- Assess the effectiveness of program delivery systems in reaching all groups.
- Conduct annual review(s) of EO/CR objectives with all employees during performance evaluation.
- Include only merit, job-related criteria in vacancy announcements.
- Ensure that all USDA headquarters and field facilities are accessible to disabled persons.
- Make reasonable accommodations for disabled employees/applicants.
- Ensure that fair and equal opportunity is afforded to all small and disadvantaged businesses, small minority- and women-owned businesses, contractors, and users of USDA services.
- Advise employees of their rights/obligations to report violations of this policy to their management, or to EO officials charged with administration of the civil rights laws, without fear of intimidation or retaliation for exercising such rights.
- Take corrective actions when discrimination occurs.
- Recognize and reward those managers, supervisors, and employees who make significant contributions to EO/CR objectives.





Application of Policy:

—This policy applies to the delivery of USDA programs and to all aspects of employment such as but not necessarily limited to:

USDA Programs

- Rural Housing Programs
- Farm Loans
- Food Stamp and Special Nutrition Programs
- Permits for Use of National Forests
- Conservation Cost Share and Teaching Assistance Program
- Price Support and Acreage Reduction Programs
- Rural Electrification and Telephone Programs
- Community Facilities Programs

Employment

- Promotion
- Recognition
- Compensation
- Recruiting/Hiring
- Discipline
- Transfers/Reassignments/Details
- Training and Educational Assistance
- Termination of Employment

- Assuring adequate resources to achieve employment and program delivery objectives.
- Eliminating barriers to achieving these objectives.

Managers' and Supervisors' Responsibilities:

—Managers/supervisors are responsible for:

- Conducting regular reviews of agency activities (employment and program delivery).
- Communicating progress to general officers and agency heads.
- Establishing and communicating annual EO/CR expectations.
- Building and managing a culturally diverse work force at all levels.
- Assuring adequate resources to achieve employment and program delivery objectives.
- Eliminating barriers to achieving these objectives.

Employees' Responsibilities:

—Employees are responsible for:

- Knowing and supporting EO/CR policy.
- Performing their duties in a manner consistent with EO/CR policy.
- Assuring bias-free written and oral communications.
- Respecting and valuing differences of other employees and clients.
- Preparing themselves for career advancement opportunities.

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Accountability:

- All general officers, agency heads, managers, and supervisors within USDA are accountable for achieving agreed-upon EO/CR objectives and will be evaluated annually on documented results. Accountability for achieving their EO/CR objectives extends to all nonsupervisory employees.
- EO and CR will be a critical element in all employee performance plans.
- In accordance with their plans, USDA employees eligible for bonuses, rank or cash awards who fail to meet the agreed-upon criteria in the EO/CR element shall be rated less than fully successful and declared ineligible for bonuses, rank and cash awards.

Agency Reporting Requirements:

- In addition to the currently required reports (AEP, FEORP, AEPPHI, and CRI), a reporting and tracking system for use by the Office of the Secretary will be created. Reports will monitor quarterly progress by agency, Under/Assistant Secretaries, and the Department as a whole.

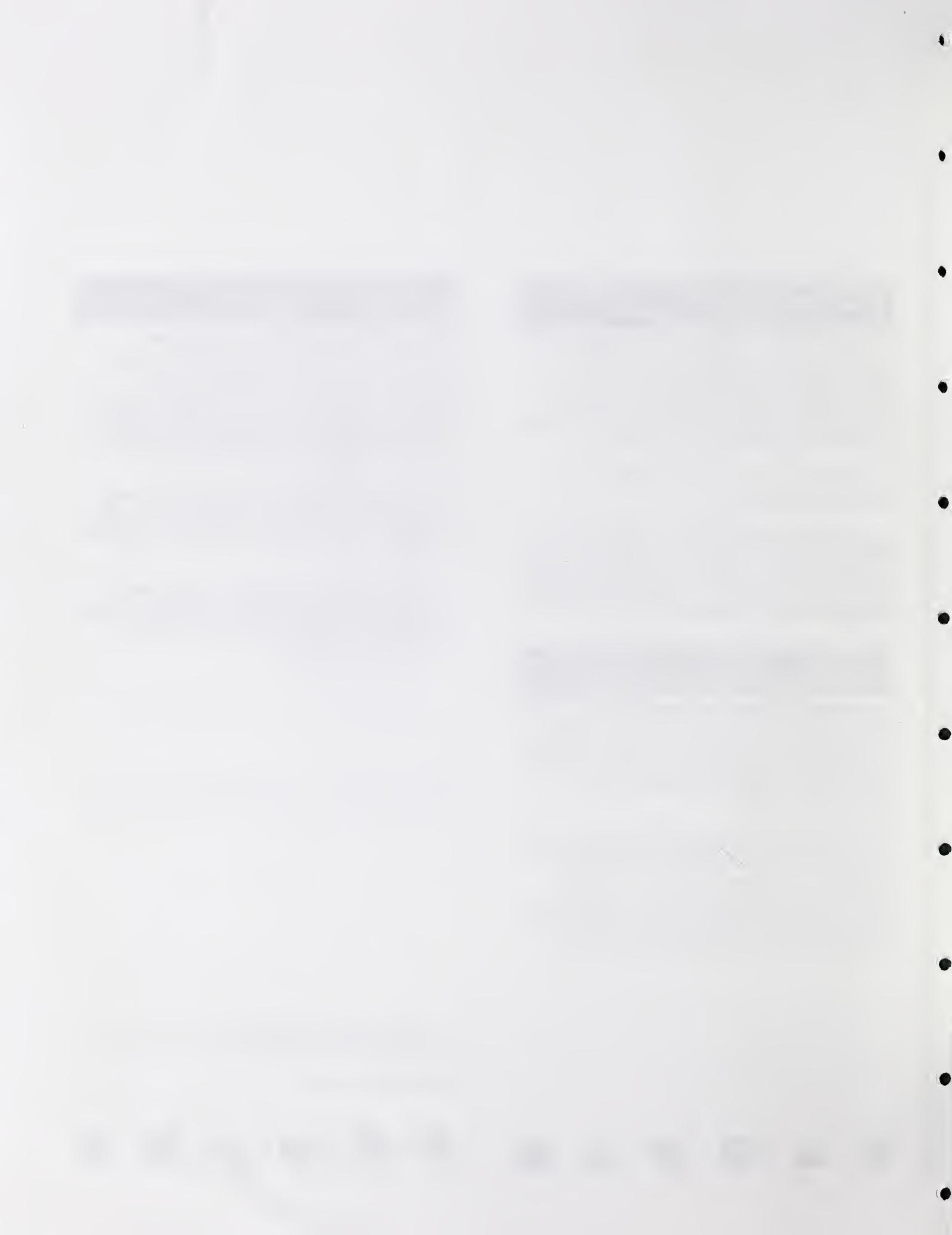
In accordance with the Affirmative Employment Program Plan, objectives will be established at the beginning of each fiscal year by race / national origin and sex groups for the following categories: SES, GM, GS and other pay categories. Objectives will also be established for persons with disabilities.

Complaints:

- As part of the Department's commitment to maintaining a discrimination-free work environment, managers shall be alert and sensitive to discriminatory practices and encourage employees to discuss questions and concerns affecting their employment with management officials or Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Counselors.
- Management shall be alert and sensitive to any discriminatory practices in program delivery and act quickly to resolve issues in a positive, forthright manner.
- EO/CR posters must be placed conspicuously throughout USDA work locations to provide instruction to employees and the public for filing a discrimination complaint.

For additional copies of this brochure, order AD-1058 from the USDA warehouse in Landover, Md.

Reprinted October 1990





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AgNIC 22nd Annual Meeting

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1. On a scale of 1-5 with 5 being very useful and 1 being less useful
please rate the following sessions:

Keynote
 Ithaka Project Panel Discussion
 Work Groups and Priority Updates
 Agricultural Law Partnership
 Lightening Talks
 Awards Dinner
 Business Meeting
 Other

Comments:

2. Did this meeting meet your expectations?

Yes
 No

Comments:

3. Were the facilities satisfactory

Yes
 No

Comments:

4. Please list program and other suggestions you have for the 2018 meeting.

5. Are you currently an AgNIC partner? If not would you like to have the Secretariat contact you for additional information about becoming a partner?

Yes
 No



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Contact information if you would like to be contacted by the Secretariat:

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